



Australian Bureau of Statistics

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Labour force characteristics of Indigenous Australians

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians have a higher unemployment rate and a lower labour force participation rate than the rest of Australia's population, according to experimental estimates from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics today.

In February 2000 there were 134,600 Indigenous people aged 15 years and over in the labour force. The number of Indigenous people in employment was 110,900, which represented 1.2% of the total number of Australians in employment. There were 23,700 Indigenous people unemployed.

In February 2000 the unemployment rate was 17.6% for Indigenous people, which compares with 7.3% for non-Indigenous people. The labour force participation rate, which is the number in the labour force expressed as a percentage of the population aged 15 and over, was 52.9% for Indigenous people and 63.7% for non-Indigenous people. The report shows a similar picture for 1994 to 1999.

The report also presents extensive information about how the ABS measures employment and unemployment, and draws attention to a number of important statistical and data quality issues which should be considered when using the LFS estimates to describe labour force characteristics of Indigenous people. In particular, reliability of estimates are affected by the small number of Indigenous persons in the LFS sample, the relatively small size of the population and particular collection difficulties in remote regions.

Details are in Occasional Paper **Labour Force Characteristics of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians: Experimental Estimates from the Labour Force Survey, 2000** (cat. no. 6287.0) available from the ABS Bookshop. The main features of this publication can be found on this site. If you wish to purchase a copy of this publication contact the ABS bookshop in your capital city.

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